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OUTLINE OF THESIS

THE TEXT AND LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

****

(Paul Little)

INTRODUCTION.

A. TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

B. PHILOLOGY.

C. BEARING OF THESE UPON THE BIBLE AND INSPIRATION.

D. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

(Submitted, April 1925).

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THE TEXT AND LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

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INTRODUCTION: The discoveries of the New Testament and other early Christian manuscripts, and more recently the findings of papyri and ostraca have directly enhanced the value of the New Testament literature. Because of the light thrown by these ancient documents, the New Testament of our day is a different New Testament from that of our forefathers. We may not have welcomed the change, we may have our doubts about its desirability, but the fact remains that it has come.

In the New Testament (as well as in the Old), we find no mechanical perfection, no infallible result of miraculous immunity from mistakes. From the various impressions that Jesus made and that are reflected in the fragmentary accounts of his life, we must construct the real picture of his wondrous personality. Through the mists of legend and tradition must we attempt to discern his features. From the words attributed to him; words sometimes colored by the temperament or idiosyncrasies of the scribe, we must gather the teachings that have shaped the destiny of the modern world.

It is quite a satisfaction that in spite of all the narrowness of some of the writer, and the controversial spirit of others, that in the New Testament we do find substantially the story of Jesus' life and the great principles of his teaching. And these we may discern without binding ourselves to accept as historical every statement we find in the Gospels. In view of these facts we aim to discuss the following points of view:

(1). Textual Criticism.
(2). Philology.
(3). Bearing of these upon the Bible and Inspiration.

A. TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

1. PURPOSE AND NEED OF TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

The chief aim of Textual Criticism is to clear all existing copies of the Holy Scriptures whether in manuscripts or in print, from errors and corruptions and to restore them to the conditions in which they first left the hands of the original writers. It differs from Historical Criticism which deals with the origin, date, theology and authority of the writings.

Strictly speaking, textual criticism has nothing whatever to do with theology or hermeneutics except to furnish a solid basis for these. It is confined to the original form and integrity of the text. It attempts to decide not what the authors of the Old and New Testaments might have written, or that what they ought to have written, but what they actually D I D write. Hence, one of the important tasks of a textual critic is to detect the errors which have crept into the text in the course of its transmission, and to recover, so far as possible, the text in its original form.

Textual criticism is quite necessary for students of the New Testament because the original copies of all its books have been lost, and the only way of restoring their contents is by a careful comparison of the copies, no two being alike, that have been derived from them by a long chain of transcriptions.

Printed books of the same edition are all alike, but copied are never perfectly similar to each other. At times words and letters are mistaken by the copyists, their eyes wander from one line to another, they may omit or repeat whole sentences. Human imperfections will mar the most highly finished production. Several copies by different persons or even by the same person are sure to differ more or less.

Let the originals disappear, and the work of copying go on and deterioration increases all the time. In a thousand years two copies from the same original will materially differ from each other. Are these things true of the Scriptures? Most certainly. God might have so guided the hand and fixed the attention of successive generations of copyists so that no jot nor title should have been changed, but he must have done that by continuous miracle by making fallible men and many of them for this purpose absolutely infallible. But the real facts show that He did not choose so to do.

2. VARIATIONS

There are two kinds of errors to be found in manuscripts, first, accidental;; second, intentional.

(1) Accidental Variations.

(a) Variations are sometimes made by an innocent desire to correct the text.

(b) To supply defects.

(c) To harmonize discrepancies.

Souter, in his admirable volume on The Text and Canon of the New Testament, P. 113, gives the following illustration which is quite apropos to our present discussion:

In Luke 19:37 the original text is Περὶ πάντων ὧν λεγόντες (so Syr. vet. only). The next step is that a marginal δυνάμεων is supplied by a scribe to explain the indefinite ὧν. This form gets into the text in B: but all other MSS. correct the resulting error in grammar by altering πάντων to πασῶν.

The remedies for accidental errors are various, according to the nature of these errors. Briefly they may be classified as follows:

(1) Wrong division of words.

In I Tim. 3:16 some authorities take ὁμολογουμένως as ὁμολογοῦμεν ὡς, and in II Tim. 2:17 some take γάγγραινα as γάγγρα ἵνα.

(2) Omission of syllables, words or lines.

This is a very common type of error.

(3) Repetition of syllables, words or lines.

Letters, groups of letters, words and lines may be written twice (or even oftener) instead of once. This type of error is known as "Dittography".

(4) Shifting of syllables or words.

The copyist does not as a general rule consciously transpose words or syllables but frequently it is done through the influence of dominant associations. He substitutes an order of words which, in respect of syntax, metre or rhythm is more familiar to him.

(5) Marginal glosses getting into the text.

Luke 19:37 as previously quoted is an instance. However, this type of error is not nearly so frequent as was at one time supposed.

An example of this will be found in II Tim. 4:19, where certain authorities add, from the Acta Pauli, the words, 'Lectra his wife and Simaea.'

A kindred error is that whereby an omission noticed afterwards by the scribe, and placed in the lower or upper margin, with marks to indicate where the insertion should be made, is misunderstood by a later copyist. The words may thus be placed wrongly by him.

(2) Some of these variations were intentional.

Some of the variations were designed to furnish grounds for heretical notions, but there were too many manuscripts to make this possible very often. These variations began very early.

ORIGEN (254), complained of the great corruptions of the text of his day.

JEROME (419), says that there are as many distinct forms of the text as there are codices, and that the text of the Gospels was in confusion.

The Gospels and Epistles have suffered the most. In the present manuscripts, it is said that there are 200,000 various readings, but most of them are so minute as to be unimportant.

Hence, the multitude of the various readings need not alarm or puzzle any Christian. It is the natural result of the great wealth of our documentary resources. If we had only one manuscript two centuries old, it may not have any various readings, but we would have a text that we never could be sure of. It is always safer to "have more anchors than one". Therefore, when we multiply manuscripts, we multiply various readings, but by accurate collation we get at the true words.

3. MATERIALS FOR TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

(1) THE MATERIALS.

The most ancient books were written on stone or metal tablets of baked clay; in cunieform characters or hieroglyphics, the former being Assyrian and the latter Egyptian.

Among the later Greeks and Romans delicate plates of wood and ivory were used. In New Testament times, writing was preserved in books made of Papyrus or Vellum. Papyrus was a fragile material made from some kind of reeds found in the Nile Valley. Vellum was made from skins, and this was usually prepared to stripe of about four inches wide fastened laterally, and so forming a long strip or roll, wound on one or two wands and if on one rolled from the end and if on two rolled from both ends, kept in cases of leather or wood or metal, so that they are called volumes, derived from the Latin "Valvo". Sometimes the separate pages were stitched together in the form of a modern book, but it was very cumbersome. Probably all of the New Testament books were written on papyrus.

Souter (The text and canon of the N.T. p.5), divides the history of the manuscripts into three periods:

(a) Papyrus period. Lasting to the seventh century.

(b) Vellum or Parchment period. Beginning from the third century to the fifteenth century.

(c) Paper period. Beginning with the fourteenth century to the present time.

There were two causes for the change of papyrus to vellum. The first was the decrease in the supply of the papyrus material, and the second and more important cause was the greater usefulness and durability of vellum.

In our discussion of the Papyrus we should not fail to mention one of the most important discoveries recently made in Upper Egypt. In fact the oldest known pieces of New Testament manuscript are P^1 (S^d e 01), a papyrus fragment found at Oxyrhynchus, Egypt,, and is now in the possession of the United States of America. It contains Matt. 1: 1-9, 12, 13, 14-20 and written probably in the third century.

P^5 (S^d e 02), found at the same place and is preserved in the British Museum, London, containing John 1: 23-31, 33-41; 20:11-17, 19-25. This also is about the same date as the above.

The most considerable piece of papyrus surviving is one which once contained the Epistle to the Hebrews and other books (P^{13}), but Chapters 2:14 - 5:5, 10:8-11:13, 28-12:17 of the Epistle to the Hebrews alone survive. This manuscript was also found at Oxyrhynchus and is also in the British Museum, and dates from the early part of the fourth century.

Apart from Christian literature, an interesting discovery was made at Herculanium which was destroyed in 79. It was made here in the decade 1750 and 1760 and is a library of 2000 volumes. True, there is no important book among them, but they show the form and fashion of the books of the first Christian century. They are written in capitals without accents or breathings, punctuations rare and spaces between sentences few.

(2) Types of manuscripts.

There are two great divisions of the manuscripts of the New Testament:

(a) Uncials.

(b) Cursives.

Sometimes these are known as "Majuscules" and "Minuscules", which mean "Somewhat larger" and "Somewhat smaller".

Uncial and Cursive are words derived from the Latin, "UNCTA" meaning Inch", and "CURRO", meaning "To run". The Uncials were written in large capitals without separation between words, as for example:

"FORGODSOLOVEDTHEWORLDTHATHEGAVEHISONLYBEGOTTENSON".

The Uncials, while not attractive in appearance, yet they are the most precious treasures the Christian Church possesses. Many of the Cursive writings were beautifully illumined with exquisite miniatures and initial letters.

According to Prof. D. A. Hayes, in his"Introduction to the New Testament", p. 86,"the Uncial manuscripts approximately number 110, none being later than the tenth century. Of the Cursives there are about 3,560 or more, none earlier than the ninth century and none later than the sixteenth. Only one Uncial manuscript contains the whole New Testament, and only thirty of all kinds have all chapters and books. Of the Uncials, 68 have the Gospels or parts of them, 16 have the Acts and the General Epistles of Paul, and five of them have the book of Revelation."

(3) PECULIARITIES OF THE MANUSCRIPTS.

(a) Many manuscripts prepared for public service have portions to be read on certain days, these being called Lectionaries. If they are lessons from the Gospels they are called Evangelistaria, those which had readings from the Acts and the Epistles being called Praxapostoloi. There are three times as many of the second as the third.

(b) In the process of time the text was broken irregularly where there was a break in the sense, the deviations being called "TITLOI", (Titles). These were long chapters with summary of contents attached.

(c) Ammonius of Alexandria, who lived about 220, divided the Gospels into sections for the purpose of marking parallel passages. He marked them off under 10 canons or lists. Eusebius, the father of Church History adopted this method and it was called the Eusebian - Ammonian sections.

(d) Another peculiarity was introduced by Euthalius, a Deacon of Alexandria, who published the Acts, the Pauline Epistles and the General Epistles about the year 458. He marked every fiftieth line with its appropriate number, these markings being called, "STIKOI", by which the length of any writings was marked.

(e) The present Chapters of our Bible were introduced by Stephen Langton in 1228 in the Latin Vulgate. The verses were set off by Robert Stephens in 1551 while on a journey on a stage from Paris to Geneva.

(4) DETERMINATION OF THE AGE OF MANUSCRIPTS.

(a) The chief guide is the form of the letters. The material. If vellum, they are early, and if paper, they are of comparatively late date.

(b) If they have several columns on a page like papyrus, then they are of very early date.

(c) If they have Ammonian sections, then they are later than 220 A.D.

(d) If they have marks of sticometry, then they are later than 458 A. D.

(e) If they are Initial letters, miniatures, any ornamentation, then they are comparatively of late date.

(5) PRESERVATION OF MANUSCRIPTS .

The New Testament was written in the latter part of the first century of the Christian era. The discovery of printing came in the middle of the 15th century, and the first production of considerable importance was an elegant Latin Bible printed by Guttenburg in 1456. The last copy of this was sold in England for about $17,000.00. Hence, for about 1400 years the scriptures were preserved like other ancient manuscripts by copies made by hand. These copies were made by tachygraphers, quich writers, or scribes. The most careful copies were made by Caligraphers, beautiful writers. These were private students, and the monks through the middle ages devoted days and months and sometimes a lifetime in copying. "Through their wise deligence we owe all or nearly all we know not only the Bible, but of the precious remains of profane literature."

The original manuscripts are all gone, they having been written on perishable papyrus. Later copies were made on more endurable vellum, most of which were destroyed in the persecutions of the Christians. All the authorities of the Roman empire were engaged in ferreting out copies of the Bible and in some districts destroyed every one of them.

The majority of manuscripts are of recent date, though there are a few precious vellum parchments from the earliest date, but our oldest manuscripts are as distant in time from the authors as the Revised Version is from the Authorized Verson, about 300 years. But this is a better showing than any other classic of antiquity.

Homer lived about 900 years B. C. and there is no complete copy of his works earlier than the 13th century A. D. Fragements of Homer from the 6th century were found in 1891, and a fragment of papyrus was found in Egypt dated from the first century B. C.

Of Heroditus, the father of history, there are no manuscripts earlier than the 9th century A. D. Of Plato we have only one manuscript before the 9th century. A fragment of one of Plato's dialogues, "PHAEDO", not later than the third century B. C.

One copy of Virgil goes back to the fourth century A. D. It is kept in the Vatican library. There is only one manuscript of the Roman history of Vallius Paterculus. The first six books of the Annals of Tacitus we have in only one manuscript and that dates from the fifteenth century A. D., and there is no clear and definite allusion to this except in the twentieth century.

Such is the general state of evidence for the ancient books. But for the New Testament, we have two splendid Manuscripts of the fourth century, one of them complete; 10 of the fifth century, 24 of the sixth, and over 3000 in all, if we include those that are fragments. Hence, it is quite true that, "We have more evidence for the text of the New Testament than for any other writings of antiquity whatsoever."

(4) MANUSCRIPTS, VERSIONS, QUOTATIONS.

The documentary evidence for the text of the New Testament is derived entirely from manuscripts. Direct evidence is furnished by Greek manuscripts; they represent to us what was originally written or dictated by the author of a book, subject only to such errors as may have arisen through transcription.

Indirect evidence is furnished by VERSIONS and also by Quotations of Fathers. Each great class of documentary evidence supplies valuable testimony both for investigation of the history of the text as a whole and for the determination of the true text in detail.

As this is quite a large field in itself, we shall attempt to only enumerate the most important documents with brief descriptions of the same, believing that it may be of convenience to us in our future study.

I. GREEK MANUSCRIPTS.

1. CODEX SINAITICUS. The symbol is ℵ (Aleph).

(1) CONTENTS. This has all the New Testament, part of the Old Testament, and part of the Pastors of Hermas, and all the Epistles of Barnabas. Both of the latter were read and reverenced as divine scriptures.

(2) DESCRIPTION. It has 346 1/2 leaves, 13 1/2 inches wide by 15 inches long; 199 leaves with parts of the Old Testament, the poetical portions having two columns on a page and all the others four. The manuscript is defective in the Old Testament, but is the most complete copy of the New Testament known to exist. The parchment is of the quality made of skins of young antelopes. Some think that it must have taken about 195 antelopes to furnish the parchments for it.

The text is in beautiful Uncial letters with no divisions of letters and words and sentences, no accents, breathings, pause marks, titles or notes. The margin has the Ammonian sections and Eusebian canons. At least ten different revisors during the period of the 12th century have attempted corrections and have marred its beauty.

This invaluable manuscript was discovered in the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai, in February 1859 by Tischendorf. In the biblical world, it was the greatest discovery of the 19th century.

(3) DATE. Its date is the fourth century, probably the middle of it.

(4) LOCATION. It was the property of the Russian Czar in Petrograd and presumably it still is there.

2. CODEX VATICANUS. Symbol is B.

(1) CONTENTS. It has the Septuagint (LXX.), but considerable portions are lost, all of Genesis (20 leaves) up to Gen. 46:28; part of a leaf in 2 Kings, and Psalms 105-137. It has all of the New Testament up to Heb. 9:14, that is, all but I and II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Revelation. The book of Revelation is in the Codex, but was written in the 15th century.

(2) DESCRIPTION. It has 756 leaves on the finest vellum; 146 leaves belonging to the New Testament, and are one foot square. It is bound in book form. It was originally written in Uncials, delicate and beautiful, and perfectly clear and legible after 1500 years. There are three narrow columns on a page, no divisions between words, but a change of subject marked by the space of one letter; punctuation marks are rare, accents are added by later hands, also the larger initial letters. It has titles and subscriptions. It is the most complete of the early Old Testament manuscripts, but all have been marred by accident, neglect, and age.

(3) DATE. It was written in the fourth century. Tischendorf says it scarcely differs in age from "Aleph". Tregelles says it was written probably before the Council of Nicea in 325 and certainly before 340. Schrivener says it is probably the oldest vellum manuscript in existence, and Westcott and Hort give it first rank.

(4) LOCATION. It is in the Vatican Library at Rome, which was founded by Pope Nicholas V in 1448. It is one of the most remarkable collections in the world, having more than 100,000 volumes, one-fourth of them being manuscripts. It has many treasures of almost inestimabel value, but the greatest of them is the CODEX B. It seems to be of Alexandrian origin, but it is not known where it really came from. It appears in the first catalogue of the Vatican Library published in 1475.

3. CODEX ALEXANDRINUS. Symbol is A.

(1) CONTENTS. Fragmentary Septuagint (LXX.), in the New Testament 20 leaves are lacking, at the beginning of Matthew, to Matt. 25:6; 2 leaves out of John from 6:5 to 8:52; 3 leaves from II Corinthians, from 4:13 to 12:7, but it has all the remainder of the New Testament, also the Epistles of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians. It is a work of rare value. For a long period it was the only copy known of this Epistle and was regarded as scripture.

(2) DESCRIPTION. Written on vellum and well preserved. The Uncials are larger than in Codex B. It has no spaces, accents, breathings, but has Titloi and Ammonian sections. In several places in the beginning of the book the first line is vermillion. Each page has two columns of about fifty lines, 20 letters to the line, and it is bound in quires of eight leaves. There are frequent omissions and many mistakes in spelling. The text has evidently been revised.

(3) DATE. Treggeles says that it was the middle, and Tischendorf the end of the fifth century. All critics are agreed that it is somewhere in that century.

(4) LOCATION. It is now in the British Museum. It was once owned by Cyril Lukar, Patriarch of Constantinople. It was given by him to Charles I of England in 1621, and was transferred from the king's library to the British museum when the latter was founded in 1753. In these three manuscripts we have the three of the oldest Bibles in the world.

Aleph has four columns to a page, B has three, and A has two.

4. CODEX EPHRAEMI, Syri Rescriptus. Symbol is C.

(1) CONTENTS. Fragemnts of the Septuagint (LXX.) and nearly all of the New Testament. It lacks II John II Thessalonians, 37 chapters of the Gospels, ten chapters of the Acts, 42 chapters of the Epistles, and eight chapters of the book of Revelation. It has less than two-thirds of the New Testament but ranks high as a critical authority. It is considered as among the greatest literary treasures in Christendom.

(2) DESCRIPTION. It is a Palimpsest, that is, written in an old book which has had its former writings erased. In the twelfth century the writings of St. Ephraem, the great Syrian father who lived at Edessa, in the fourth century, replaced the now scarcely legible ancient writing of the New Testament. Leaves for this second writing were taken without any regard to their original position, so that now passages widely separated in the scripture are found together. The leaves are often upside down and there are many omissions. In the book as it now exists there are 249 leaves, 145 leaves belonging to the New Testament. There are no spaces between words, some sectional divisions, Ammonian sections but not Eusebian canons. There are short titles and subscriptions in the Gospels. In some respects, specially in the text of the Gospels, it is superior to A.

(3) DATE. It dates from the middle of the fifth century.

(4) LOCATION. It is in the National Library at Paris. It doubtless came from Egypt and must have been a long time in Alexandria. It was first brought to Europe by John Lascar and came into the possession of the Medici family. Catherine de Medici brought it from Italy when she came from there to France to be married about 1550. In the seventeenth

century Peter Allix discovered that it was a Palimpsest. Tischendorf was the first to successfully decipher it. Among all the Uncials, only eight or ten are Palimpsests and a smaller number among the Cursives.

These four oldest manuscripts are in the possession of the four great branches of the Christian Church.

Aleph, Greek, in Petrograd; B, Roman Catholic, in Rome; A, Anglican, in London; C, Gallican, in France.

Germany has no manuscripts and yet it has done more to discover and utilize them than any other nation. The United States has none of them and yet America stands in the front rank in Biblical Institutes, having about 200 Theological Seminaries and over 1000 Professors, but her weak point is in textual criticism.

(5) CODEX BEZAE. Symbol is D.

This Codex is in Cambridge University Library, England. It has the Gospels and Acts, Greek on the left-hand pages, Latin on the right.

6. "W". WASHINGTON (or Freer) MANUSCRIPTS.

Souter (Ibid. p. 31), states that at the present time very little is known about this manuscript. It was formerly in the library of the monastery of Schenute at Atripe (near Sohag), opposite Akhmim, in Egypt. It is a complete codex of the Gospels, which came into the possession of C. L. Freer of Detroit, Michigan, early in 1906. Written not later than the fourth century, and not later than the sixth, it is remarkable in giving the Gospels in the 'Western' order, Matthew, John, Luke, Mark, and in containing an interpolation within the longer ending of Mark, for which no other Greek authority is known to be extant.

It was Gregory who named it "W" in his list in 1908, and it has the number e 014 in von Soden's list.

In this Freer collection there are four manuscripts:

I. Deuteronomy and Joshua.

II. Psalms

III. Gospels.

IV. Fragments of the Epistles of Paul.

Mr. Freer bought these manuscripts of an Arab dealer named Ali in Gizeh, near Cairo, on December 19, 1906.

II. VERSIONS.

1. LATIN VERSIONS.

These fall into two main groups, namely, African and European, and are denominated by the small letters of the Latin alphabet. Sometimes these are known as the Old Latin (Italic) and the Vulgate.

(1) African Group:

K - Codex Bobiensis.

E - " Palatinus.

F - " Floriacensis.

M - " Speculum.

(2) European Group

A - Codex Vercellensis.

B - " Veronensis.

Q - " Monacensis.

Jerome seems to have made use of this Codex. Of his Vulgate Version, there are said to be 8000 manuscripts, one of the best of which is Codex Amiatinus, copied in Northumbria as a present for Pope Gregory in 716 A. D.

2. SYRIAC VERSIONS.

(1) Peshito (Simple). This is supposed to be at least as old as the Latin Version.

(2) Diatessaron (of Tatian), compiled early in the second half of the second century, probably 170.

(3) Philoxenian Syriac. In 508, Philoxenus, Jacobite bishop of Mabug in eastern Syria caused a new translation of the New Testament. In 616 we have a revision of this by Thomas of Harkel and is called the "Harklean Syriac". It includes all the New Testament except the apocalypse.

(4) Palestinian Syriac. The extant manuscripts of it are mainly lectionaries, and its textual importance is slight.

3. EGYPTIAN OR COPTIC VERSIONS.

(1). Bohairic. This contains the whole New Testament. It became the accepted Bible of the Coptic Church. It follows the Greek very closely and is more trustworthy than the other versions.

(2). Sahidic. This was formerly known as the "Thebaic", the Version of Upper Egypt as the Bohairic was of the Lower Egypt.

(3). Middle Egyptian Version. Only few fragments of vellum and papyrus which have come to light recently, notably in the FAYYUM.

The largest New Testament fragamts as yet extant is a 6th century palimpsest which now is in the British Museum.

4. OTHER VERSIONS

(1) Armenian

(2) Gothic

(3) Georgian

(4) Ethiopic

(5) Persian

(6) Arabic, etc.

III. QUOTATIONS OF FATHERS.

The third class of evidenceavailable for textual criticism is that which is derived of the Quotations from the New Testament in the writings of the early Church Fathers.

The earliest Patristic writings, such as the Epistles of Clement, Barnabas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, and the 'Shepherd' of Hermas, contain very few quotations from the New Testament, and those few are inexact. These may be grouped as follows:

(1) Greek Fathers.

(a) In the West:

170 - Justin

181 - Irenaeus. Worked mainly at Lyons, though his home was in Asia Minor.

220 - Hippolytus of Rome, a disciple of Irenaeus.

(b) In Egypt:

160-220 - Clement of Athens and Alexandria, and his disciple.

185-253 - Origen of Alexandria and Palestine.

293-373 - Athanasius.

(c) In the East:

270-330 - Eusebius of Caeserea in Palestine.

(2) Latin Fathers

(a) In Egypt: 150-220 - Tertullian

200-250 - Cyprian

In Italy: 250 - Novatian.

Later period we have 345-420 - Jerome

354-430 - Augustine.

(3) Syriac Fathers

340 - Aphraates

378 - Ephraem.

Besides these, of course, there were other writers, few of the more important ones we herewith mention.

(4) In Asia Minor

265 - Gregory Thaumaturgus

329 - Basil of Caeserea

370 - Gregory of Nyssa

379 - Gregory of Nazianus

(5) In Palestine

351 - Cyril of Jerusalem

347 - Chrysostom.

5. SAMPLE RESULTS OF TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

(1) Matt. 6:13.

This doxology was unknown to Origen, Tertullian and Cyprian, all of whom write commentaries on the Lord's Prayer. It is not found in the oldest manuscripts. Aleph ℵ, B, D, A, and C are considered defective at this point. It is not found in the ITALA or in the earliest Vulgate.

(2) Matt. 16:2,3.

> "When it is evening ye say, Fair weather, for the sky is growing red. And in the morning; A storm today, for the sky is growing red and lowering. Ye know how to tell the face of the sky, but the signs of the times ye cannot."

Although there seems to be little reason to object to these words, yet the documents are against them. Gregory is of the opinion that these verses should be bracketed or put in a footnote. "Our conception of Jesus and his teaching will not be altered by the omission."

(Gregory, Canon and Text of the N. T. p. 518.)

(3) Mark 16:9-20.

The two oldest manuscripts and some other authorities omit this section. Some other authorities have a different ending of the Gospel.

Gregory is of the opinion that these closing verses of Mark positively have no right to be in the New Testament. "If I said that they did belong to this Gospel I should speak as direct untruth as if I should insist upon it that Moscow was a city in Spain." (Ibid. p. 513.)

(3) Continued.

The question still to be considered is, whence these verses came from? Until recently no one apparently could answer, but now thanks to the findings of Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare of an old Armenian manuscript that named these verses as from the Presbyter ARISTION, and thus far no good reason has been found for doubting his authorship. Aristion is called by Papias a disciple of the Lord, and his words are every whit as good as that of Mark. But they do not belong here. They are not a part of the New Testament, and they were probably added at this ninth verse in Asia Minor at the close of the first or the beginning of the second century.

There is this further to be said, that in some of the oldest manuscripts Mark's Gospel closes blankly with the word γάρ (For), as if their scribes had never thought or heard of anything after it.

(4) Luke 22:43,44.

Here, the vision of the angel and the narrative touching bloody sweat are lacking in some documents, and are in others marked as spurious. They should at least be placed in brackets or be put on the margin.

(5) John 5:3,4.

The story of the angel that troubles the waters of the pool at Bethesda. This is undoubtedly an interpolation and represents the popular superstition for which John is not responsible.

This passage is omitted by Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott, Hort, and the Revised Version. It is not to be found in Aleph ℵ, B, or C.

(6) John 7:53 - 8:1-11.

The story of the woman taken in adultery. It is the unanimous opinion of the critics that this passage does not belong in this place, but that it is a record of fact. Manuscripts A and C are defective at this point, but they have no room for it. Aleph ℵ, and B and 58 of the Cursives omit it. Ten Cursives have the paragraph at the end of John's Gospel. Four have it at the end of Luke twenty-first chapter.

(7) Romans 9:5

In order to understand this passage we must remember of an old habit of the Jews. They had a great way of breaking out anywhere and everywhere with a doxology. This we can discern even now in their prayer-book. Nor is the history of the Church lacking in similar phenomena. Was it not a common thing few decades ago, indeed even now among certain sects, who in the midst of a prayer or sermon ejaculate loudly, "Glory to God!" "Hallelujah!" "Bless the Lord!".

Paul was in the first verses here speaking of the glorious privileges of Israel. Having summed up these glories of Israel, like a

(7) Continued.

typical Jew he says: "Thank God!" Gregory is of the opinion that many of the manuscripts which he has examined stop after σάρκα, "Flesh".

(8) Romans 15 and 16.

In our edition this Epistle closes with the majestic doxology of 16:25-27, and apparently a very fitting close. But do they really belong here? In many of the documents we find that these verses are omitted.

Codex Claromontanus, D^{paul} omitted these verses.

Codex Augiensis, F^{paul} also leaves these words out, but it leaves room for them in the Greek text at the close of the sixteenth chapter.

Codex Bornerianus at Dresden, G^{paul} omits these words, but differs from the Codex Augiensis, because it leaves room for them not here, but at the close of the fourteenth chapter (14:23), and that both in the Greek and Latin text.

It is probably that Paul's original letter to the Romans closed at 14:23 with the doxology, without a long series of intimate greetings to people whom he did not know. The fifteenth chapter might then have been a letter written by Paul at a later date, and written to the Romans. The sixteenth chapter could well have been a letter of recommendation written for Phoebe to the Church at Ephesus.

(9) I Timothy 3:16.

Wetstein was deposed from his Professorship for leaving out the word "GOD" from this passage. Griesbach, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort read "He who", along with Wetstein, Aleph ℵ, A and B and C are defective.

(10) I John 2:23.

This is a very important case of omission. It is sustained by Aleph ℵ, A, B. and C, and has very properly been restored in our Revised Version.

(11) I John 5:7-8.

This passage is wanting in all the Greek manuscripts as well as in all the ancient versions.

Gregory (Ibid. p.511), relative to this passage remarks, "No one can today complain that textual criticism has done wrong in thrusting these spurious words out of the text of the New Testament. The pity is only that they have been allowed for so long a time to usurp a place upon the pages of the New Testament, and that a theologian could in the twentieth century still be found so devoid of critical insight as to publish them as a part of the sacred text."

Now, after having discussed somewhat in detail the purpose and aim of textual criticism, it may not be amiss for us in concluding this section to say that textual criticism is of incalculable value to us, for it has given us a purer text and brought us nearer to the heart of the writers.

Textual criticism brings with it a certainty of its own,, such as was after all, quite unknown in pre-critical times. Obviously, if

the New Testament is to tell us the message which it contains, whether authoritatively or not, we must first have in our hands as pure a text as possible. This the textual critics have attempted to do, and we are greatly indebted to them for removing these various corruptions which have crept into the text, and have given us so far as possible the actual words of the writers. They have recovered for the Bible, its proper dignity and spiritual power by rescuing it from corruptions and restoring it to its original form.

B. PHILOLOGY.

1. THE LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Thus far we have attempted to show the great importance of Textual Criticism, which has given us a purer text than we would have had otherwise. It has also enabled us to have saner views of the great essentials effecting the Christian life. We are now ready to the consideration of the language of the New Testament.

Languages radically differ among themselves, and while each nation thinks its language is the best, scholars are agreed that the classical Greek is superior to all its successors and well nigh perfect in its ability to express thought.

Classical Greek literature begins with Homer (10th century B.D.), and ends with Aristotle, whose death occurred 322 B.C. The dialects of the writers differ; but when the great names of Homer, Pindar, and herodotus are put aside, we find nearly all the rest credited to ATTIC, the dialect of Athens, the brain of ancient Greece. Professor Moulton thinks that the Attic dialect was undeniably the "most perfect language the world has ever seen, for the clearness, subtlety, and beauty with which it can express thought". (Hastings B.D. p. 530.)

It should be stated here that the standpoint of scholarship in regard to this subject has materially altered in recent years.

(1) The Old View.

In our study of the New Testament, in all ages, scholars have been struck by the fact that its Greek to a considerable extent seemed to

stand alone. We have already referred to the fact that it differs greatly from the language of the classical Greek. Professor J. H. Moulton (H.B.D. p. 528), gives two excellent reasons, to wit:

(a) New Testament writers were steeped in the language of the Greek Old Testament, a translation which largely followed the Hebrew original with a slavish literalness.

(b) Writers were mostly Jews who used Aramaic in their daily life. When, therefore, they thought and wrote in Greek, they were prone to translate literally from their native tongue; and 'Aramaisms' which came from the Septuagint (LXX.).

(2) The New View.

It is to Adolf Deissmann that the credit belongs of initiating a most far-reaching change of view. His attention was called to a volume of transcripts from the Egyptian papyri to which we have already referred. He was at once struck by their frequent points of contact with the vocabulary of New Testament Greek. After having read through several collections of papyri, and of contemporary Greek inscriptions, he published the two volumes of his "Bible Studies" (English translation in one volume, 1901). Here he showed that the isolation of New Testament Greek could no longer be maintained. Further studies confirmed his thesis and extends it to the whole field of grammar. Briefly the two new views are:

(a) That the New Testament is written in the spoken Greek of daily life, which can be proved from inscriptions to have differed but little, as found in nearly every corner of the Roman Empire in the first century.

(b) What is peculiar in 'Biblical Greek' lies in the presence of boldly literal translations from Hebrew Old Testament or 'Aramaic sources'; even this, however, seldom goes beyond clumsy and unidiomatic, but perfectly possible Greek, and is generally restricted to the inordinate use of correct locutions which were rare in the ordinary spoken dialect.

In his later volume, "Light from the Ancient East", Professor Deissmann proves that a correct understanding of the New Testament is impossible unless we recognize that the apostles and early missionaries had to do chiefly with what he terms the "Non-literary"[x], lower and middle classes of the Mediterranean world.

Indeed, it is of the greatest importance that critical students of the New Testament should be familiar with the non-literary records of the period when Jesus and the apostles lived, for these ancient documents on papyri[xx] and ostraca[xxx] reproduce the exact thought and very words of the very people with whom the early missionaries came in most direct contact. They are true, unerring witnesses of the life, customs, mode of thought, desires, as well as the exact words of the uncultured classes to whom the new religion appealed with special force at the outset.

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x "The chief and most general value of the non-literary memorials of the Roman Empire, I think, is this: They help us to correct the picture of the ancient world which we have formed by viewing it, hitherto, exclusively from above. They place us in the midst of that class in which we have to think of the apostle Paul, and the early Christians gathering recruits." (P. 8.)

xx "The word PAPYRUS is the name of a reed-plant (Cyperus Papyrus L), which at one time grew in great profusion in the river Nile, and gave its name to the writing material or "paper" of antiquity, formed from it.....For non-literary documents a common size was from 9-11 inches in height, and from 5-5½ inches in breadth." ("Here and there among the Papyri". Prof. George Milligan, p.2.)
"The oldest written Papyrus known to be in existence is, according to Kenyon, an account-sheet belonging to the reign of the Egyptian king Assa, which is conjecturally dated, cira 2600 B.C.". (Deismann's "Light from ancient East, p.22.)

xxx "OSTRACA are pieces of broken pottery on which something has been written." (Deissmann's "Light from the Ancient East", p.42.)

Christ was a plain man, the son of a carpenter. The apostles, with the possible exceptions of John and Paul, had but little in common with the higher cultured classes. Their little word was below the level of the literary men of their age. Their message, as a rule, appealed not to the men "higher-up", but took hold immediately of the peasants, the artisans, and the fishermen all along the Mediterranean Coast. These toiling masses, though ignorant of the great literary treasures of their age, nevertheless, understood and spoke cosmopolitan Greek, and welcomed the new evangels of a new Gospel. Though these humbler ones could not inscribe their names on marble and brass, they made abundant use of Papyri and Ostraca (broken pieces of potsherds), which having served their purposes were dumped into the dirt-heaps of small Egyptian villages.

It is these, after centuries of silence, which reveal to us the condition as well as the language of the poor in the days of Primitive Christianity.

Some years ago the Berlin Academy of Science published in three large volumes a kind of "WHO WAS WHO" in Imperial Rome from the time of Augustus to Diocletian. It contained the names of 8,644 men and women known from literature and the inscriptions, and deemed worthy of a place in this great PROSOPOGRAPHYA. The names of John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, Paul, and Luke, to say nothing of scores of others mentioned in the New Testament, were conspicuous by their absence. Time, the great avenger of the neglected, has changed all this , for of the 8,644 noticed in this great biographical work, no four names are as well known today as John, Jesus, Paul, and Luke.

It is indeed quite fortunate that a scholar of the ability of Dr. Deissmann has devoted so much time and energy to the study of

papyri and ostraca, these venerable witnesses dug out of ash-piles in the Nile Valley; for by so doing he has made the study of the New Testament not only easier but more satisfactory to the searchers of truth and light. He has dispelled many a learned theory and has pointed out many parallelisms and points of agreement between the language of these vulgar texts and that of the New Testament. He has done his work broad-mindedly, brilliantly and without ever being dogmatic.

Among the various aids that have come to us to shed light on the vocabulary of the New Testament, none are more interesting and helpful than the collections referred to, of papyri and ostraca letters which have been unearthed in Egypt during the past quarter of a century.

As far back as 1863, Bishop Lightfoot said: "That if we could recover letters that ordinary people wrote to eachother without any thought of being literary, we should have the greatest possible help for the understanding of the language of the New Testament."

Thanks to the energetic labors of the Egyptian Exploration Society and to the wonderful preservative qualities of the climate and sandy soil of Egypt, many hundreds of these letters which Bishop Lightfoot longed for, have been discovered.

Some of these letters were found in the rubbish mounds where the people dumped their wastepaper, some in the ruins of temples and houses, while several were used as wrappings inside the mummified crocodiles. Doctors Grenfell and Hunt, who have done such invaluable pioneer work in the discovery of papyri and ostraca, relate a rather peculiar incident of how some workmen, weary with much fruitless digging, came to a cemetery of mummified crocodiles. One of the men thinking that such a place was unlikely to yield any "finds", in chagrine and disgust, struck the head of one of the crocodiles and

so revealed in the wrapping within enough material to fill nearly two volumes of the "OXYRHYNCHUS PAPYRI". In various instances papyrus rolls had been stuffed into the throat or other cavities of the crocodile mummies. (Tebtunis Papyri, i. p.VI. f).

Among various other publications (foreign), the United States is represented by various groups of papyri published under the editorship of Professor E. J. Goodspeed of the University of Chicago, who also assisted in Part ii. of the above mentioned "Tebtunis Papyri".

According to Professor Milligan, the general result is that there are at the present time about 10,000 published documents.

In this connection we must emphasize the great service rendered by the study of Archaeology. The great monuments in classic lands on stone, metal, etc., have been most carefully studied by men like Boeck, Mommsen, Ramsay, and other eminent scholars of the past century. To the students of history and civilization, the immense collections in the museums are of incalculable value. But as far as the New Testament study is concerned, the work done during the past forty years by scholars of various nations in the ruins of Anatolia, Asia Minor; Egypt, Greece, and the islands of the Mediterranean, etc., has been of far greater value. Therevelations have been such as to necessitate the re-writing of GRAMMARS and LEXICONS, but best of all, it has presented us with a clearer view of the Gospels and Epistles.

By far the greater part of these revelations were on papyri and ostraca, the poor man's material for recording his business and thoughts. Papyrus, as durable as the pyramids, has been employed for

milleniums, never more so perhaps than in the days of the apostles. It is more than probable that some of their Epistles were written on papyrus. Papyri, though brought into the museum of Europe about 200 years ago, were regarded, at first, as nothing more than objects of curiosity, and little or no practical use was made of their contents. There has been a great change in the last half century. Numberless papyri, in more or less perfect condition, have been discovered and deciphered during this period. The services of Grenfell and Hunt in this branch of study are known to all students of archaeology.

Now, what makes these papyri recently discovered at Oxyrhyncus and elsewhere of such value is that they are what Dr. Deissmann has called "Non-literary", coming from the lower strata of society. They consist of business and legal documents, wills, deeds, bills of divorce, magic formulas, children's school exercises, and letters of friendship.

There were, too, a few purely literary as well as a number of excerpts from the Greek classics and a few quotations from the Bible. Approximately, they cover a period of about 1000 years, from about 300 B. C. to 700 A. D.

Though there are papyri in the Hieratic, Demotic, Hebrew, Aramaic, Coptic, Arabic, Latin, etc., but the bulk of them are in the colloquial, cosmopolitan Greek. These ancient documents give us a very correct picture of everyday life of the common people, especially those dating from the days of the Primitive Christian Church. Many of them are dated exactly, to the year, month, and even day of the month, just as a letter or contract of today.

Dr. Deissmann says: "Paradoxical as it will seem to many, let me say that the non-literary papyri are of greater value to the historical inquirer than are the literary."

Though but few of them are of Christian origin, they are yet valuable as side-lights, since they often aid greatly in determining the meaning of many words and expressions employed in the New Testament.

For example, the COPTIC PAPYRI have been of great help in the study of Gnosticism and other heresies.

But the discovery and decipherment of ostraca has also been a great help to the students of the New Testament. These inscribed pieces of broken pottery, apparently useless, and consequently neglected as trash for centuries, and hence discarded in the rubbish-heap, have proven quite helpful to the philologist and historian. The scientific study of the ostraca is comparatively modern. Two of its chief promoters are Professor Wilcken of Germany and Dr. Crum of the Egyptian Exploration Fund. The ostraca, like the papyri, are written in many languages, mostly, however, in Greek, and for the greater part are non-literary. Few of them have quotations from Greek authors, the Old and New Testaments. One ostracan is inscribed with the Lord's Prayer.

These recently discovered papyri and ostraca have shown conclusively that there is no justification for the old belief that the New Testament was written in a language peculiarly its own. On the other hand, the language is precisely the same as that spoken and written by the common people of the Mediterranean basin in the imperial age. It was the non-literary Greek, not the Greek of Plato and Demosthenes, but rather that of the working man, the traveler, and the business life of the period.

Christ, no doubt, spoke Aramaic, and possibly Greek. The same is true of the apostles. The New Testament was written in colloquial Greek or the language understood by the common people all along the Mediterranean coast. As Christianity was to be a world religion, it was necessary that the most cosmopolitan language of the age should be used in promulgating the new religion.

It has been well said that the New Testament is the best monument of late colloquial Greek. This greatest of all books makes no effort after elegance of diction or even conformity to grammar and the cannons of literature. This non-literary style, this colloquial Greek, the language of the shops and market-places, of the peasant and fisherman, must have been the best adapted for the preaching of the Gospel in the various great centers.

During the last century, the learned expositors of the New Testament, misled by the grammarians and lexicographers, were fond of labeling a very large number of words as "biblical" or "peculiar to the New Testament and Apocrypha". At one time there were no fewer than 600 such words. Of these more than 100 have been found in late classical Greek, and a still greater number on the papyri and ostraca of recent times. So, today , instead of 600 or more, "biblical or New Testament words", the number has been reduced to fifty or less. No doubt further investigation will reduce the number still more.

After years of laborious research, Deissmann gives a long list of words and expressions, and by so doing successfully refutes the old theory, and shows that Christianity coined but few new words. But as it did put new life into old religious formulas , so also it did put new meaning into some words. The new religion was for all mankind,

beginning at Jerusalem, but branching out from this great center in every direction; the spoken word first, and that in Aramaic, without a single line in writing. Once the narrow borders of Palestine crossed, the non-literary, cosmopolitan language ,understood very generally, must be used. The apostles passed on their missionary journeys from one center to another, made converts everywhere as they went, but, not able to remain long anywhere, they were forced to write friendly letters to those left behind, and that in a language understood by both preacher and the convert. Now, most of these letters, specially those of the more prominent apostles, were private, intended for one person, and not for the public. It was not in the mind of Paul that any of them should ever become public, any more than the private letters written in our day.

The letters of Paul, at first purely private, were raised to the dignity of literature afterward when the piety of the Churches collected them by copying and so made them accessible to the whole of Christendom. Had Paul intended to write for posterity - and nothing was further from his mind - his style might have been altogether different. Deissmann well says: "Paul whose yearning and ardent hope expected the Lord, and with him the judgment and the world to come.....Paul, who reckoned the future of this world not by centuries and milleniums, but by years, had no presentiment of the providence that watched over the fate of his letters in the world's history."

As with the bulk of Paul's letters, so with II and II John; they were too purely personal in content and purpose, and written in the same non-literary style peculiar to the common people of that age.

When, however ,we come to the Epistles of James, Peter and Jude, they are more general and, consequently, so much the more literary in style and scope. These are addressed not to one person, nor yet to one Church, but to the multitudes scattered abroad. As the Jews of the Dispersion, no doubt, for the greater part, were more familiar with Greek than Aramaic, current in Palestine, these Epislte s, too, are written in colloquial Greek tongue.

But, strangely enough, Paul, the most cosmopolitan of all the apostles, wrote private letters and did more personal work than any of the others. Though he traveled more extensively than any other apostle, and knew more men, and yet, there is less of the general and more of the particular in all his letters. He did not remain long in Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Philippi, Rome, or any other large place, so he kept in touch with his beloved converts by means of correspondences.

Because of our appreciation and in order to show the great importance of these recent discoveries in Egypt, their bearings and the light which they shed on the study of the New Testament language we deem it wise to consider the following points of interest:

I. Samples of Papyri and Ostracan letters.

II. Parallelism in Divine names.

III. Permanent Values.

I. SAMPLES OF PAPYRI AND OSTRACAN LETTERS.

By way of illustration, among the many, we give the following few samples of Papyrus letters:

1. The first, written by a boy to his father, and is taken from one of the volumes of "Oxyrhynchus Papyri", edited by Doctors Grenfell and Hunt.

"Aurelius Dius to Aurelius Horion.

My sweetest Father, many greetings. I perform the act of veneration for you every day before the gods of this place. Do not be anxious, father, about my studies. I am industrious and TAKE RELAXATION. I salute my mother (and here follow the rest of the family who are mentioned by name)."

The verb translated ἀναψύχω "Taking relaxation", in this letter is the same verb as Paul uses in II Tim. 1:16 when he says of Onesiphorus, "he hath oft refreshed me". While we have the noun formed from this verb in the well known phrase "showers (seasons) of refreshing", in Acts 3:19.

2. How interesting it is to read among the papyri, the following order to return home for the Census, issued by a Prefect of Egypt dated A. D. 104, and is found in Professor Milligan's Selections.

"Gaius Maximus, Prefect of Egypt(says): Seeing that the time has come for the house to house census, it is necessary to compel all those who for any cause whatsoever are residing out of their district to

return to their own homes that they may both carry out the regular order of the census and may also attend diligently to the cultivation of their allotments."

What an interesting analogy this document presents to Luke 2:1-4 and how it confirms the fact that Herod, when he issued his command, was acting under Roman orders (cf. Ramsay's "Luke the Physician" p.244).

3. The following is a copy of a Census Return, dated A. D. 48.

"To Dorian Strategus...from Thermoutharian, the daughter of Thoonis. There are living in the house which belongs to me in the South Lane.....

"Thermoutharian, a freedwoman, about 65 years of age, of medium height, dark complexion, long visaged, a scar on the right knee.

"I, the above-mentioned Thermoutharian, along with my guardian the said Apolloniua, swear by Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus Emperor that assuredly the preceding document makes a sound and true return of those living with me and that there is no one else living with me, neither a stranger nor an Alexandrian citizen nor a freedman nor a Roman citizen nor an Egyptian in addition to the aforesaid."

4. Here is another letter of a boy, taken from Lietzmann's small collection of Greek Papyri (written in the first century).

"Serenus to Apolinarion, his father. Hearty greetings. I perform my act of worship on thy behalf before all the gods. I received from Ptoleminus 63 apples and from his wife Serenias another 11 apples, and I want you to know

"And of this they have received.....drachmas by way of EARNEST MONEY, to be reckoned by you in the price."

The word in the letter translated "EARNEST MONEY" is the Greek word ἀρραβών (Arrabon), showing that the vernacular usage amply confirms the New Testament sense of an "Earnest" or a part given in advance of what will be bestowed fully afterward. (cf. 2Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14.) (Milligan, "Here and There among the Papyri", p.68.)

Eph. 1:14 ὅ ἐστιν ἀρραβὼν τῆς κληρονομίας ἡμῶν

Revised Version translates it:

"which is an EARNEST of our inheritance."

Professor James Moffatt translates the word:

"The pledge and installment of our common heritage."

The word is still inuse in modern Greek in the sense of deposit, while the modern Greek word for engagement ring is ἀρραβώνας (Arabon).

II. PARALLELISMS IN DIVINE NAMES.

If we read the papyri and the ostraca as well as other monuments of the apostolic period, and compare them with the New Testament, we see a remarkable correspondence in terms and expressions. This applies specially to the "titles" given the emperors, to Jesus Christ, and also to God.

The very same appellations applied to the Father and our Savior are found on the monuments as "titles" of the emperors and rulers, who, as is well known, were raised to the rank of the gods. If Dr. Deissmann be correct, our Savior very adroitly set his seal of disapproval upon emperor worship in the familiar passage:

> "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's,
> and unto God the things that are god's."

Be that as it may, it is a matter of history, that "titles" due no human being were freely given to the emperors.

The emperors are constantly addressed as "god" or "divine" on the monuments. Julius Caesar, for example, is called, "the god made manifest, the offspring of Ares and Aphrodite, and common savior of life."

An inscription of 17 B. C. discovered in Egypt speaks of Augustus as the "god of gods", and even that monstrous monstrosity, NERO, is named, "the good god". This, as any one may see, stands in striking contrast with the words of Jesus when He said: "None is good save one, even God."

Let us consider the ascription, "Son of God", a very favorite expression of Paul's and a very common one in the Roman monuments. We find the following inscription to Augustus on a marble pillar at

Pergamum:

> "The emperor Caesar, son of a god, the god Augustus, of every land and sea the overseer."

The term "overseer" is frequently applied to Jehovah in the apocryphal books. On a votive tablet to Nero at Magnesia the following occurs:

> "Son of the greatest of the gods, Tiberius Claudius."

The title, divine, is likewise given to the emperors in both early and late inscriptions. This continued long after the state had become Christian. We also find the word Κύριος (Kurios), translated, "Lord" in our English Versions, used in the same way. This is the equivalent of Jehovah of the Old Testament and is constantly applied to Jesus Christ, as in the phrase: "Our Lord Jesus Christ", and so too to heathen gods and kings. One inscription reads, "Our Lord Serapis". Ptolemy XIII is addressed on a monument as, "the lord king god", and on another he and his associates are called, "the lords, the most great gods". On a tablet to Nero we read, "the lord of the whole world".

The apostles, of course, were familiar with the cult of emperors and rulers. No one can read I Cor. 8:5-6

> "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

Phil. 2:9-11

> "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:
> "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;
> "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

and other passages without becoming aware of at least a silent protest from the apostle against the blasphemous practice. Jude must have experienced something of the same resentment when he wrote: "Our ONLY Master and LORD Jesus Christ."

The early Christians, notable Polycarp, felt the wickedness of the custom of deifying the rulers, and suffered death rather than conform to the common practice. And so did the Jews on more than one occasion. (See Josephus, Wars VII. X 1).

And lastly, let us mention that the emperors were, likewise, addressed as "Savior of the world". This what Deissmann calls Johannine expression was very frequently applied to Hadrian, Julius Caesar, Augustus, and other emperors.

But what seems to be more striking is the fact that the word εὐαγγέλιον (Euanggelion), "gospel", or "good-tidings", is not, as we had all been accustomed to believe of Christian origin, but that it was used before the beginning of the Christian era. Dr. Deissmann quotes two inscriptions. One reads: "But the birthday of the god (Emperor Augustus) was for the world the beginning of 'TIDINGS OF JOY'." (Deissmann p. 371, "Light from the Ancient East".)

The other quotation is in a note of congratulation to an officer and reads:

"Forasmuch as I have become aware of the 'TIDINGS OF JOY' concerning the proclaiming of Emperor Gaius Verus Maximus Augustus, the son of our Lord, most dear to the gods." (Deissmann, p. 371.)

No one can read these ancient papyri and ostraca without being struck with the numberless parallels and points of agreement, not only in volcabulary but even in thought, between them and the

books of the New Testament, specially the Letters of St. Paul, the great traveler.

Quite well has Dr. Moulton said:

"It was no blind chance that ordained the time of the Birth at Bethlehem. The ages had long been preparing for the royal visitation. The world was ready to understand those who came to speak in its own tongue the mighty works of God. So with the time came the message and God's heralds went forth to their work, 'Having an eternal gospel to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people'."

III. V A L U E S.

The values of these letters and documents for the present day student is very great.

1. In the first place, they serve to throw light on the conditions under which the humble and lowly of the time lived. As a rule, the literary works of the early Christian centuries serve to reveal to us the life lived in the higher circles of wealth and culture, while many of the papyri consist of the "short and simple annals of the poor".

They light up for us the cottage home, the small farmstead, the village store. We see in them at first hand the joys and sorrows, the problems and trials, the struggles and hardships, of that class of society from which the early Church recruited most of its members, described by Paul as "the foolish in the world", the "mean and despised", and "nonentities".

2. For the student of the social history of the first three centuries of the Christian era, specially, these studies are invaluable because they afford such a mass of contemporary evidence. What a flood of light the following letter, written in B. C. 1 to his wife by a workman who is away from home, sheds on the attitude of society toward GIRL BABIES.

> "Hilarion to Alis his sister, greetings. Also to BERUS my lady. (This is a courteous form of letters, as in 2 John 1.) and Apollonarian. Know that we are still even now in Alexandria. Be not distressed if at the general coming in I remain at Alexandria. I pray thee and beseech thee, take care of the little child, and as soon as we receive wages, I will send (them) up to thee. If thou art delivered, if it was a male child, let it live; if it was female, cast it out (expose it). I beg you therefore not to worry."
> Deissmann - Light from the Ancient East, p. 154.
> Oxyrhynchus Papri, IV. N..744.

3. The study of these letters and documents are equally valuable for the light they shed on the religious customs of the times. Most of the private letters contain some reference to the gods as in the following:

> "I thank my lord Serapis that when I was in danger at sea, he saved me."
>
> "I give thanks to the gods continually."
>
> "Appolonius requests you to dine at the table of the lord Serapis on the approaching coming of age of his brother at the temple of Theoris."

This invitation shows how difficult itwas for the early Christians not to be implicated in the idolatrous practices of the time.

The temples of these heathen gods played an important part in the life of these people. In times of persecution of the Christians they issued certificates to those who had sacrificed in heathen manner, copies of which had to be shown to the Imperial authorities when demanded. Such certificates have been found among the papyri. The temples, too, afforded sanctuary to runaway slaves, whilethe authorities often acted as intermediaries to purchase the freedom of slaves. Many declarations like the following are found in the papyri, "Apollo, the Pythian, bought for Sosibius of Amphissa for freedom a female slave whose name is Nicaea for the price of three 'minae' of silver and half a 'mina'."

The prevalence of the practice of consulting the local oracle is seen in the following that has come down to us. "To Sokanobkoneous the great, great god. Answer! Shall I remain in Bacchios? Shall I meet him? Answer me this."

The widespread cult of emperor-worship is forced upon our notice on every hand. We can realize more clearly some of the difficulties which the apostles had to encounter in the light of these facts.

The following pathetic letter found among the "Oxyrhynchus Papyri", second century A. D. now in the possession of Yale University, shows how these pagan religions failed to bring any true comfort in time of great sorrow and bereavement. The letter is written by a certain Irene to her friend Taonophris and her husband, Philo, who had apparently just lost a son.

> "Irene to Taonnophris and Philo, good comfort! I was as sorry and wept over the departed one as I wept for Didymas. And all things, whatsoever were fitting, I did, and all mine.... But,. nevertheless, against such things one can do nothing. Therefore, comfort ye one another. Fare ye well."
> (Deissmann - Light from the Ancient East, p. 164.)

No doubt St. Paul must have been thinking of such despairing souls when he wrote his letter to the Thessalonians, he inserted the following words of comfort to the bereaved Christians over their dead:

> I Thess. 4:13: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."

And then with all the realism of an ancient popular writer he unfolds a picture of the Christian's future hope, culminating in the certainty.

> I Thess. 4:17: "And so shall we ever be with the Lord."

To which he immediately adds, in conclusion:

> I Thess. 4:18: "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

Reminding us of the ending of Irene's letter of consolation: -

Irene Παρηγορεῖτε οὖν ἑαυτούς! Paul ὥστε παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους, etc.

Except that behind Paul's words there is not the resignation of the "others" but a victorious certitude, triumphing over death.

4. But the greatest value of the papyri and the ostraca for the modern student lies in the help which they give in the interpretation of the language of the New Testament.

Comparison of the language of these artless letters with that of the writings of the New Testament reveals a striking correspondence. Both are written in the colloquial "lingua franca" of the day. The conquests of Alexander the Great were followed by the widespread use of the Greek tongue. It became the everyday language of Rome in the West, Ephesus and Antioch in the East, and of large areas in Egypt. This almost universal use of the Greek language led to certain changes and modifications in the vocabulary and structure.

Francis Thompson in his essay on Shelley points out how essential and beneficial it is for a poet to go outside the aristocratic circle of language and keep in touch with the great commonality, the proletariat of speech. For it is with words as with men: constant intermarriage within the limits of a patrician clan begets effete and to reinvigorate the stock, its veins must be replenished from lowly plebeian stock.

That describes fairly accurately the change that had come over the Greek of classical time. Κοινή "Koine" Greek, as the Greek of the New Testament and that of the Papyri is called, was the speech of the common people, applied of course by the writers of the New Testament to literary uses.

Professor James Moulton in his valuable introduction to Part ii. of his grammar of the New Testament says: "For the purpose the apostles and evangelistshad in view the greater simplicity of the Hellenistic gives it a decided advantage over even classical Greek. If much of the old grace was gone, the strength and suppleness, the lucidity and expressiveness of that matchless tongue were there in undimmed perfection."

The opponents of the early Christians used to taunt them by saying that their sacred book was written in the language of the boatman. What they thought to be a reproach was in effect a compliment of a high character.

We give the following as illustrative of this, for, just as Jesus called humble boatmen to be apostles of a spiritual truth, so the writers of the New Testament pressed into their service words used in the mart, the home, and seashore, and called them to the important work of conveying spiritual messages.

(1) ἄφεσις (Aphesis) is the regular word in the New Testament for "forgiveness of sins".

Luke 4:18 "Release" (to the captives)

Matt. 26:28 "Remission"

Eph. 1:7 "Forgiveness".

According to Liddell and Scott, this word was used for "untying" the boat fastened to a post by the shore in order to launch it into the deep. Spiritualizing that thought, God in the act of forgiveness releases man from all that fetters and holds him in bondage with a view of sending him forth to his service. In the papyri ἄφεσις (Aphesis) is the technical expression for the RELEASE of water from the sluices of canals for purposes of irrigation.

We see the word approaching Paul's use of it for FORGIVENESS by the occurrence of the word in inscriptions for remission from a debt or punishment.

(2) καταρτίζω (Katartizo). This word is used in St. Mark for mending or repairing nets. In Polybius, a writer of literary "koine", it is used in the sense of refitting or furnishing a ship anew. Clement of Alexandria used καταρτίον (katartion) for a "mast". This boatman's word is elevated to very high uses in the New Testament. It is used in I. Cor. 1:10 κατηρτισμένοι (perfected together), in the sense of "repairing", a church rent and torn by factions and schisms. By this use of the word Paul seems to compare the Corinthian Church to a torn net, unfitted by its lamentable divisions for the work of winning souls.

In Gal. 6:1, Paul urges the men who are spiritually minded to set about "mending" the men whose life is broken by a serious fall. and in I Thess. 3:10, the word is used of restoring a faith with many holes or defects in it.

While in the positive sense of furnishing, we find it in the saying in the Gospels, "A scholar when he is perfectly FURNISHED will be like his master", and in that beautiful doxology in Heb. 13:21, "May the God of peace FURNISH you with everything for the doing of his will."

(3) Furthermore, the Papyri, in addition to showing the colloquial character of the Greek of the New Testament, are invaluable for the light they give on individual words. ὑποστασις (Upostasis). What a new meaning this word has in Heb. 11:1, translated in the Authorized Version, "Substance", and in the Revised Version

"Assurance", in the margin, "the giving substance to", when we find it in the legal documents reads: "Faith is the TITLE-DEEDS (ὑπόστασις) of things hoped for."

(Note: The central meaning of "substance" is property, and is used here for the whole body of documents bearing on the ownership of person's property whether ἀπογραφαί sales, mortgages, etc.)

(4) πήρα (Para), meaning, "Wallet".

Deissmann in his fascinating book, "Light from the Ancient East", tells us that this word, "Wallet", used in Matthew and usually taken to mean a bag to carry food or clothes, is found on an inscription in which a temple priest boasts that he has succeeded in bringing 70 πήραι Parai (Wallets) for the temple-priestess showing that the word meant a "beggar's collecting bag".

(5) ἀτάκτως (Ataktos).

In his Epistles to the Thessalonians, Paul finds it necessary to rebuke his converts for walking "In a disorderly manner" (2 Thess.3:11). The real meaning of this word ἀτάκτως is by no means easy to determine. Does Paul refer to actual sin or moral disorder, or something less heinous? The papyri helps us in a remarkable manner. Therein is found a contract dated 66 A.D. wherein a father arranges to apprentice his son with a weaver for one year, and all the conditions of the contract are carefully laid down. Then follows the passage which interests the students of New Testament Greek. If there are any days during the period of apprenticeship on which the boy "fails to attend" or "plays truant" ὅσας δ' ἐὰν ἐν τούτῳ ἀπακτήσῃ ἡμέρας the father is to produce him for an equivalent number of days after the period is over. And the verb which is used to denote

"playing truant" is the same verb which is used by Paul in connection with the Thessalonians.

With this light thrown on the New Testament passage, we find the real meaning of Paul's exhortations to the Thessalonians. They were idling or better still, "Playing truant".

"The PAROUSIA Παρουσία of the Lord seemed to them to be so close at hand that it was unnecessary for them to interest themselves in anything else. Why go to their daily duties in the morning, when before night Christ might appear, forgetting that the best way to prepare for that coming was to show themselves active and diligent in the discharge of their daily work and duty." (Prof. George Milligan, "Here and There among the Papyri, p. 75 .)

In this Chapter, what we have attempted to say, we hope at least, to show that this important field of study yields splendid returns for the understanding of the New Testament. Paul's great counsel to Timothy,

> "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth",

can never be fulfilled by us unless we, to the best of our powers, avail ourselves of all the aids of modern discovery and scholarship to bring things new and old from the unsearchable riches of God's revelation to men.

C. THE BIBLE AND INSPIRATION

In the foregoing chapter we aimed to show that the study of the Language of the New Testament yields splendid returns for the proper understanding of the New Testament.

We now briefly wish to discuss the bearing of these studies upon the Bible and Inspiration. There is need of a constructive review of Biblical Inspiration. Men of intelligence, open-minded and Christian experience are greatly interested in a spiritual restatement of theology

" If Saint James' Bible was good enough for Saint Paul, its good enough for me." This was the emphatic protest of a southern Deacon against the reading of the American Revised Version, instead of the King James Version. In this day of science and enlightenment no sane follower of the WORD need to blindly and foolishly accept the position of the ignorant and deluded Deacon. Why, then, is this doctrine of the infallible verbal Inspiration of the Bible still maintained? Not because the Scripture itself claims any such infallibility, for it does not. It is indeed said that " all Scripture is given by Inspiration," but not that this inspiration is infallible. Inspiration is one thing, infallibility quite another. The great poets, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and many others are called inspired, and truly, because they have an inward illumination which shows them forms of truth and beauty and goodness unseen by common men. But this inspiration does not preserve them from mistakes. It does not make them infallible. Take the four Gospels and let us compare them with each other. One spirit, one life, one goal pervades them all; it is the Life of Christ. But they frequently contradict each other in details. If we demand verbal and minute accuracy, their whole story falls to the ground, and we lose our Master. They differ from each other openly and frankly all the way through as regards outward incidents. But as to the substance of the story they are ONE. They differ as to the details of Christ's resurrection, but that he really rose from the dead they are fully agreed.

Thus,if it is absolutely necessary,inorder to believe Christianity,to have verbal accuracy in the Scriptures, one cannot believe in Christianity at all,for the Scriptures cannot be verbally accurate when they differ even in unimportant minutae. But it is not necessary. What we need is to be certain as to the main facts of Christ's life,teaching and character. And we can be certain of these,just as we are certain of the main facts in the life and character of Alexander the Great,Julius Caesar,or George Washington. No one pretends that those writers from whom we derive our information concerning such persons were infallibly inspired;yet we are at least sure of the main facts of their lives and character as we are of the main facts of the life of Abraham Lincoln,Moses,or David.

Many arguments have been advanced to prove the theory of Verbal Inspiration,and some of the are very ingenious. But the difficulty with them all is that they merely aim at showing that the Bible OUGHT to be verbally inspired,not that it is so. The fact remains that it is NOT so inspired,since it is in some places opposed to science,in others to history,and in others to itself.

The traditionalists say that,"unless we believe the Scriptures infallibly true,there can be no AUTHORITY;and that we need some authority to rest upon,otherwise it all will become uncertain,and there will be no firm conviction about anything."

We quite agree that we must have firm religious convictions. We go further and say that we need to KNOW spiritual things just as we know natural things. But we contend that the belief in verbal inspiration does not give us that knowledge,but rather hinders it. We also maintain that we need to trust in the authority of Jesus. It is an immense aid to have confidence in him as the Way,the Truth,and the Life. But to trust simply in the Authority of a teacher is not knowledge;it is only the door to knowledge.

We send our children to school,and it is right that they should trust in the teacher's authority,and take what is taught on that authority. But if it ends there,they have not learned very much. Until they have made their teacher's instruction a harmonious part of their own knowledge,they have failed to learn there. In other words,authority is a door by which we enter the vast temple of truth. It is a guide which leads us through the wilderness to the Promised Land. But there its work ends. It does not give us knowledge,only the access to knowledge. The true authority of the Scripture is this,that it is a book made sacred by the love and respect of many generations;a book which has brought comfort and joy to thousands of hearts,which has been the means of converting sinners and edifying saints. Hence,we ought to approach it with trust,expectation,confidence,and read it to find what it has to teach us,seeking for the spirit of life and truth which is in it.

But to have this faith in the Bible as full of truth, it is not necessary to believe in its perfect and absolute accuracy in every respect,nor that it has been preserved as though by a miracle from all error.

The Bible may be proved full of errors as regards science,often wrong in its chronology and history. Its saints may be very imperfect characters;its prophets mistaken in their predictions; its apostles men of like passions with ourselves,and sometimes going astray. It may be true of them,as they said of themselves:

"We have this treasure in earthen vessels,that the excellency of the power may be of God,and not of us." (2 Cor.4:7).

But what is the chaff to the wheat? The power of the Bible is that it brings God to man,and lifts man to God;that it shows a providence reaching through all history,and whose everlasting arms are below all things.

A Father whose love comes down into the heart of every child, who cares for us all, and is the Saviour of all. The Holy Spirit which pervades this book is the Conforter. He brings us comfort in our sorrows, light in our darkness; hope in our despair.

Kingdoms fall, institutions perish, civilizations change, human doctrines disappear, but the imperishable truths which pervade and sanctify the Bible shall bear it up above the flood of change and the deluge of years. It will forever remain:

"A sacred ark, which from the deeps
Garners the life for worlds to be,
And with its precious burden sweeps
Adown dark time's destroying sea."

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